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ATOMIC RESEARCH IN INDIA

Bombay, 27 October -- Preparations are being made for cosmic-ray research at Aligarh under the joint direction of India and the US. The Indian Atomic Energy Commission (consisting of Dr S. S. Bhatnagar, Dr H. J. Bhabha, and Dr K. S. Krishnan) has declared that the development of weapons of mass destruction is not the aim of the commission, but that efforts will be devoted to cosmic-ray research. India is an extremely favorable area for such research because the magnetic equator passes through Indian territory. For that reason, the cost of the research equipment will be relatively low.

In addition to Aligarh, cosmic-ray research is being conducted at Calcutta, Bombay, Ahmedabad, Delhi, and Gulmarg (Kashmir). An observatory was recently set up on a high place in Gulmarg through the joint efforts of Aligarh and Kashmir universities.

The main center for atomic research in India is the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Bombay, where much research is done in connection with primary cosmic radiation. Among the prominent scientists at this institute is Prof Bernard Peters of the University of Rochester (New York), who said that in his opinion, meteorological conditions of India are especially suitable for research.

Twenty-four government-supported projects for research on atomic energy are in operation in various parts of India. The uranium deposits which have been found recently in Bihar and elsewhere will increase the supply of metals for atomic research.

A government-operated company, Rare Earths, Ltd., has opened a monazite-processing plant this year in Alwaye, Travancore-Cochin. There is so much monazite in South India that it can supply the entire country for many centuries with one hundred times as much electric power as at present. The main objective of the Atomic Energy Commission is the production of cheap electricity through atomic power so that eventually the entire economic framework of India will be changed.

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